

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for processing a floor covering comprising a facecloth layer, a backing layer, and optionally an adhesive or precoat layer, wherein the floor covering comprises at least one layer containing a polyurethane formed by reacting a polyisocyanate and a first organic polyol, which comprises:
  - contacting the floor covering with a second organic polyol;
  - heating the floor covering and second organic polyol; and
  - separating the facecloth layer from the backing layer.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said heating comprises increasing the temperature of the floor covering and second organic polyol sufficiently to at least partially liquefy the polyurethane.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein said contacting comprises grinding floor covering into smaller pieces and mixing these pieces with said second organic polyol.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein said polyurethane-containing layer is the backing layer or the adhesive or precoat layer, or both.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein the polyurethane-containing layer comprises a urethane-modified bitumen.
6. The method of claim 4, further comprising reconstituting the backing layer by contacting it with additional polyisocyanate.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein said first organic polyol and said second organic polyol are the same.

1 8. The method of claim 2, wherein said contacting comprises disposing said second organic  
2 polyol onto the facecloth layer of the floor covering, and pulling said facecloth away from said  
3 backing layer.

1 9. The method of claim 8, wherein the backing layer is contacted with a material containing  
2 additional polyisocyanate and adhered to a second facecloth, to form a second floor covering.

1 10. The method of claim 8, wherein the backing layer comprises a urethane-modified  
2 bitumen.

1 11. The method of claim 8, wherein said first and second organic polyols are the same.

1 12. The method of claim 8, further comprising contacting said facecloth layer with a second  
2 backing layer.

1 13. The method of claim 8, wherein the layer containing the polyurethane is disposed  
2 between a precoat layer and the backing layer.

1 14. The method of claim 8, wherein the backing layer comprises foamed polyurethane, and  
2 wherein the backing layer is the layer containing the polyurethane to be liquefied.

1 15. The method of claim 14, wherein the liquefied polyurethane obtained from the backing  
2 layer is refoamed with added polyisocyanate.